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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Letter dated 16 May 2000 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I would be grateful if you could have the text of this letter* distributed as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 8.

(Signed) Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

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* Reproduced as received, in Arabic and English only.

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Annex

Israeli occupation soldiers open fire at Palestinian civilians
in the occupied Palestinian territory

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In a flagrant violation of the right to life, Israeli occupation soldiers opened fire at Palestinian civilians, in West Bank and Gaza Strip, on Sunday 14 May 2000, wounding 20 Palestinians in Qalqiliya, 12 in Gaza and 23 in the south of Nablus, and killing the Palestinian Samer Ourtani, 17 years old, from Qalqiliya, who died from a gunshot in his lungs.

Crimes of deliberate killing, perpetrated by Israeli forces against Palestinians, continued during yesterday morning 15 May 2000, opening fire and wounding 32 Palestinians in Hebron, 64 in Beit Jala, 69 in Tullkurm, 9 in Jenin, 14 in Refidia, 68 in Ramallah, and 107 in Gaza. This operation has also culminated in shooting dead two Palestinians, Aaid Arif Moutlak Safdi, from Ouarteh village and the Palestinian Ahmed Jamal abdel-Fattah from Ramallah.

A Palestinian child, Oussama Abu Foul, 5 years old, was also hurt by a rubber bullet in his eye, near Netsarim settlement in Gaza.

The Journalist Najib Zakaria Abu al-Jabin, 33 years old, a correspondent for Associated Press Agency, has been wounded in his head, near Netsarim settlement to the south of Gaza.

Ramallah hospital received three cases sustaining wounds from gunshots in their heads.

Hebron hospital received several cases suffering wounds from dumdum shots, some of them in a very critical condition.

The total of cases wounded by live ammunition and rubber bullets during the last 24 hours has reached 363 wounded.

This human massacre, perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces in occupied Palestine, proves, once again, on the one hand, the extent of the gravity of the continued crimes, perpetrated unremittingly, by the Israeli occupation forces, in total violation of the principles of international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

On the other hand, this massacre underlines the firm stance of the international community towards the Israeli practices and towards their persistence on their flagrant violations of the principles of human rights, at the forefront of which is the right to life. These principles which have been always, and continuously since 1967, affirmed, in all Security Council, General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights resolutions.

In front of this new massacre and crime against the Palestinian people, at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces and armed settlers, I would be grateful if you could immediately intervene, in your capacity as High Commissioner for Human Rights, to the Government of Israel, in a bid to urge the latter to refrain from its series of crimes, bearing in mind that this Government should bear the full responsibility for the perpetration of such crimes in the occupied Palestinian territory.

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